2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

occasion he stated that it was the "law" of the spring hunt that no one should hunt buffalo alone or in a small group, violation of which invoked the sanctions applied by the Wolf-men or Stars. However, in 1940, this same informant stated twice, explicitly, that there was no police power except at the Sacred Dances and on a third occasion in that year said: "After the Sacred Dance the company disbanded, and the chief resumed control, but he did not punish anybody for hunting buffalo alone."

In any case, authority was delegated to the companies only temporarily. Otherwise there was no agency beyond that of the family which could apply sanctions of force, and then, on only two counts. A husband had the right to take the life of an unfaithful wife; the family had the right of blood revenge in case of murder. In both, however, less extreme modes of behavior were approved and bloodshed could honorably be avoided.

When murder occurred, if the family of the murdered person could be persuaded to accept a payment of goods as restitution, further spilling of blood was prevented. It was said that the lodge of the band chief offered temporary refuge to a murderer and that sanctuary was likewise available in the lodge of the Keeper either of the Flat or of the Feathered Pipe. It was thought that if the murderer and his family, who collectively shared responsibility for the crime, could flee the scene, time would be gained for negotiating the blood-price. If one blood relative killed another, there was no retaliation, but the murderer was shunned.

While there was a considerable amount of fighting and quarreling among the Gros Ventres, especially under the influence of liquor, disputes were usually settled without bloodshed. Outright murder, as distinct from deaths attributed to witchcraft, was seemingly relatively infrequent. The following seven cases, arranged chronologically, illustrate actual behavior. Each of these was referred to independently by several different informants with a high level of agreement among them on details. The total represents all the murders that were known to have occurred in the period from about 1850 to 1885.

Case No. 1. These events took place about 1847. Two young men, who were related by blood, went on foot to steal horses from the enemy. One had obtained a fine horse, but the other had been

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of the Upper Quarters who were not involved in this fight, stopped them and reminded them that this was a drunken fight and that the members of the two bands concerned were not really enemies. By their bravery in confronting these angry and drunken men who were armed, while they themselves were not, these two peacemakers prevented what might have turned into a "civil war." 682

Although outwardly calm reigned, tension remained high and the bands scattered in the attempt to maintain peace. A few weeks later, however, messengers were sent to all the bands to inform them that a Crazy Dance had been vowed and that all the bands must meet at a given spot and together prepare for the Dance, moving as a unit to the locale selected for the Dance. All did as directed, but the band of the medicine man, feeling the mounting tension, decided to break away from the others and left the main body the night before the tribe reached the place where the Dance was to be performed. When the company which was policing the Dance heard about the defection, they went after the band to force its return. The company caught up with this band and found the murderer sitting in the semicircle and smoking with his fellow band-members. The police called out to these men: "Don't you know it has been announced that we have to move to such-and-such a place for the Dance? That is the law. Hurry and move back!" But the recalcitrant band members paid no attention and sat with heads bowed. It so happened that a son of one of the Frozens who had been murdered was a member of the policing company. He rode up behind the murderer and shot him through the head. The other members of the police company shouted: "Let's kill them all!" and fired above their heads to further frighten them. This forced them to move back to the main body in double quick time, leaving the body of the murderer lying there. The Dance proceeded, and after it had concluded one of the Crazy Men was found with his head bashed in, but no one knew who was guilty of this crime and in any case the company had no more authority once the Dance was finished. The Frozen who had used his position as a member of the policing company to avenge his father's murder was killed in action against the enemy shortly thereafter, and so further feuding was prevented.

Case No. 7. During a drinking spree toward the end of the 682 684

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

682 684 buffalo days, a certain man left his lodge to join other drinkers. When he returned he saw his wife in the arms of another man and heard her say: "I love you more than I love him." Whereupon he picked up his gun and killed the lover who happened to be the chief of his own band. He spared his wife. No attempt at revenge was made, but the murderer was looked down upon for having killed one of his own relatives.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

some liver at them and then put on the meanest part of the meat to boil. Her husband didn't like it, and his brother who had brought the visitor didn't like it either. Her husband picked up the manifold and said: 'Some day I will see about this.' Her brother-in-law said to her: 'Some day I might hear something about you (meaning that she had a lover), and you will find out that I am as mean as you are.' So it seems that not long after that someone saw this woman with a lover and told her brother-in-law, who immediately filled his gun and went over to her and said: 'So I find you aren't as mean as you pretend to be. You are generous about some things. I heard things about you. I came to kill you.' The woman replied, very sassily: 'Well, kill me then!' and he shot her. When they told her husband she had been killed, he said: 'Well, it is all right. I would have done the same.'"

Etiquette was not so formal with women visitors as with men. If a woman were hungry she would not hesitate to go to the lodge of a very good friend or relative and ask for food, with the reasonable expectation that the hostess would get busy and prepare something for her. Singer, herself, however, had the following experience, where hospitality was lacking. "One day a little dog came into my lodge carrying a piece of meat. I said: 'I am going to take the meat from that dog. I am hungry.' But my husband said: 'No, let the poor little thing have it, he is hungry.' I took it away from the dog anyway and then I said: 'Wait, I am going to beg some meat,' and I went over to a certain lodge. Two of that man's wives were out gathering wood and one was home. This one didn't even greet me but sat with her head bowed. I told her: 'I have come because I am hungry.' But still this woman didn't say anything at all. I sat there a long time. Finally a neighboring woman, who happened to be the man's daughter-in-law, came home with wood and looked in. She called me over to her lodge and said: 'What were you doing there?' I told her: 'I just went there because I was hungry and she never even talked to me.' So this woman cooked for me, fed me and gave me a piece of meat to carry home. When I was leaving she told me: 'They really have lots of meat, but they give me only the shoulder. As you leave you must hide this meat I am giving you up under

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

have someone come back a real hero, and, although such a promise to torture oneself could be made in regard to other relatives, "it was usually a sister who thought so much of her brother who did that." Other forms of sacrifice which a girl might practice on her brother's behalf would be to take a fine robe, or something else of value, and stick it on top of the lodge saying: "I offer this that my brother may come back with good luck, bringing something fine from war." This could be even more specific in that a girl could offer, say, the tip of her finger, if her brother would bring back a particular thing, such as a scalp or a horse or a weapon. Again, should her brother be ill or wounded, a woman would be exceedingly concerned and might go so far, as in one case recorded, of promising that if he should recover she would join the Women's Lodge—"which was considered a great thing to do for your brother."

Usually a man would have some voice in regard to his sister's marriage and, if he were the one who made the arrangements, he received the larger share of the bride-price. It was said, too, that a brother would be especially concerned regarding his younger sister's moral conduct and might take it upon himself to keep her in line. Although parents would feel the disgrace of an erring daughter, a brother was expected to react violently. If her husband failed to punish his wife for adultery, her brother could kill her. Some instances were given, too, in which the man took his own life indirectly, by riding into the midst of the enemy without taking any precautions, because he felt so keenly the dishonor his sister who was unfaithful had imposed on him.

Maternal Uncle and Paternal Aunt

"Because a brother and a sister thought so much of each other, they were expected to be good to each other's children." If a woman had several brothers, it was the eldest who assumed the duties of the maternal uncle and his relationship with his nephews was a direct one. Should the eldest brother be unable to undertake the responsibility another brother or male cousin was expected to do so.

The maternal uncle was supposed to watch his sister's children closely even though her husband was on the scene. If he did not

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

case of necessity pay the indemnity. Other people might say to a man that it was of no use to help that nephew, that he was no good. Yet the uncle did not give up trying to save face for the nephew, and to do his best to shield or rehabilitate him—but at the same time he "talked turkey to him." 604

Even after a man was married, his maternal uncle had the right of disciplining him. If a husband mistreated his wife undeservedly it was said that his maternal uncle could step in and take the wife temporarily away from his nephew, letting him shift for himself, doing his own cooking and so on, "until he came to his senses." A man would have to take such treatment from his uncle, it was said, because public opinion condemned the husband and backed up the uncle, who was considered within his rights. [684] [626]

Furthermore the maternal uncle would feel duty-bound to protect his nephew from danger. An extreme case was cited in illustration. "A Gros Ventre boy was captured by the Crow when fairly young and he remained among them after he grew up although he could have returned. On one occasion the Gros Ventres surrounded a war party of Crow among whom was this young Gros Ventre man. The young man appealed to his mother's brother to save his life, and the uncle responded by using every argument he could think of. The other Gros Ventres in the party refused the plea, however, on the grounds that the boy had previously had the opportunity to return to his own people, and asked: 'Why didn't he think of his uncle then?'"

On the other side of the picture, if a young man were successful and "on the way up," as the saying goes, his maternal uncle had priority over the boy's father or older brother in helping him by giving generously to him in private and by giving away publicly in his honor as lavishly as possible. It was stated, for instance, that if a young man was ready to go to war, his uncle might go to him and give him a horse, encouraging him to face the enemy bravely and to show courage under fire. He would tell his nephew: "I'm going to watch you. Here is your chance to show what you can do." Thus he might "steal the show" from a father or older brother who themselves might have intended to help the boy off to a good start. Because it was the uncle who did this, nothing would be said. All his relatives would be proud of a successful young [431]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

585 178 was Keeper of the Crow Belt, as he had taken Gertrude and camped at the Mission. The next morning the couple was married by the priest and Gertrude's father brought the buggy full of goods and gave them all that, including the team of horses. Everybody could see that this couple started off with a lot."

585 Instead of making arrangements, a man might simply send his daughter to become the wife of another man without forewarning him. The recipient of such a bride could not well refuse her and was supposed to act as though he were happy to have her, regardless of how many other wives he might have or his real feelings in the matter. He, too, would normally give some kind of present to her father, the amount depending somewhat on the previous reputation of the bride. On the one side, she might have been given merely to get her off her father's hands, on the other, she might have been highly desirable as a wife and her father would have taken this means to show generosity on his own part and to honor the husband he had selected.

583 Sometimes elopements occurred, but this was very rarely if ever the case, so far as the girl was concerned, until she had been given at least once in marriage arranged by her relatives. Should [684] a married woman run off with another man, it was up to her husband to deal with the situation. If, however, she had been widowed or divorced, and eloped before another marriage had been arranged, her relatives would be angry, but the affair could be patched up if the usual presents to them were forthcoming from the man.

591 There was no hard and fast rule in regard to residence. Matrilocal residence in the same lodge was incompatible with the observance of the mother-in-law taboo and it was said that if a man wished his son-in-law to remain with him, he provided the separate lodge and all the equipment.[7] The tendency seems to have been toward patrilocal residence in general, although it was not unusual for a couple to move back and forth. Coming Daylight lived most of her married life with her husband's people. As a child-bride she first lived in the lodge with her husband's parents; later on she and her husband went to her people, living with her

[7] Obligations between kin are discussed pp. 109–10. Kroeber, 1908, p. 180, states that a young married man often lived with his father-in-law.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

 593

have any reason to suspect us [of infidelity] so he shouldn't have 586
been planning to get rid of us."

It was said that in case a husband abused his wife without reason his relatives remonstrated with him, reminding him, for instance, that if he acquired a reputation for ill-treating his wife he might have difficulty in obtaining additional wives of good reputation. Some claimed that his maternal uncle could go so far as to remove the wife from her husband's household "until he came to his senses." Such interference was however seemingly rare. A wife was seldom given the benefit of any doubt.

The husband had the right to punish, even with death, any de- [684]
parture from the standard of chastity set for women.

Most of the harsh treatment accorded to wives was believed to 593
have been the result of just suspicion of their infidelity, where sufficient evidence was lacking to prove it. Girls were warned before marriage to so conduct themselves as to avoid their husbands' jealousy at all costs. They were told, for instance, that when visiting other women it was well to be chaperoned since otherwise a jealous husband could magnify an innocent visit into an incipient affair with the woman's husband. While it was con- [726]
sidered within the proprieties for women to go out and count coups on the enemy fallen near camp, "they didn't approve of women chasing off on horseback to 'hit the enemy' because their husbands were sure to suspect they were off to meet some man." A girl was instructed by her relatives to yield willingly to her husband when he claimed his marital rights lest he interpret her reluctance as preference for another.

On the other hand, when there was reasonable proof of the 593
wife's infidelity, the husband was more or less forced by public 684
opinion to take some action against her. He was, however, allowed considerable latitude in choosing among several equally honorable alternatives.

The extreme punishment was that of death, and apparently it was not uncommonly applied. Among the cases described was the following which concerned a contemporary of Singer and Coming Daylight. "On one occasion a man discovered that one of his wives was missing. As usual in such circumstances, he inquired whether any man in the camp was unaccounted for. He soon

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

593 684 learned that his wife had gone off with a certain one and set out in pursuit. He was in a rage as he met the lovers, who had turned back toward the camp. The man fled, leaving the wife to face her husband's fury. He commanded her to dismount and then tore her robe from her. After cutting off her breasts and her arms, he abandoned the body and returned home."

According to our informants, however, not all cases were so clearly defined. Some women lost their lives merely because their husbands were suspicious. A man who acted without sufficient evidence ran some slight risk that his wife's family would avenge her death, but it was usually assumed that the wife must have been guilty. This was the situation in regard to a cousin of Singer's about whom she gave the following account. "This cousin of mine was a very beautiful woman. Her husband's lodge was close to that of Sits Like A Woman, one of the most famous chiefs the Gros Ventres ever had. This woman was fleshing a buffalo hide one day, and the chief saw her there outside her lodge. He said to Coming Daylight, then a very small girl, 'Run over to that woman who is tanning and see what she says to you.' So, childlike, she ran over there and told the woman: 'Sits Like A Woman told me to come over to the woman who is tanning and see what she tells me.' The woman said: 'Sh-h, you mustn't talk like that.' Being young and innocent Coming Daylight didn't realize the situation, and reported to the chief that she had been hushed up. The chief said: 'Well, who would be afraid of him [the husband]. What is she afraid of him for?' Now the husband was inside his lodge at the time, and overhearing this, he imagined his wife was running with this great chief. He bided his time and it so happened that the woman, who was a friend of the chief's wife, went one day to that lodge and asked her friend for something to eat. She was really hungry, and while she was sitting there eating, her husband came to the lodge. The chief said: 'Come in. I will give you a drink.' But the man did not accept the invitation, and merely said to his wife: 'You needn't come back!' This boded no good, so the frightened woman went to her mother's lodge. Her mother was very much upset, and was calling for protection for her daughter, when the husband came with his gun and shot his wife six times. No one retaliated."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Instead of killing an adulterous wife, or one so suspected, the husband might disfigure her and send her away. Coming Daylight witnessed the following scene when she was a child. "She had been sent on an errand by her grandmother to a lodge at some distance from her own. About half-way to her destination as she approached a clump of trees she heard a woman screaming. She then saw that this woman was standing there with her hair tied to the limb of a tree. The woman's husband cut off her nose, and left her tied there and bleeding. Coming Daylight was so frightened that she ran, and on her way back went around the other way to avoid passing that spot again. She doesn't know who released the woman, but she does recall that the woman was so ashamed that she hardly ever went outside her lodge, and if anyone came in she would hold her hand over her face. Ever after that, whenever Coming Daylight met that man, she would make a gesture toward him [double hand into fist, then force fingers out, spreading them wide apart], which means 'I hate you.' Her grandmother used to tell her not to do that lest that man harm her through supernatural means, but she would answer: 'I don't care if he has power. He is cruel and I hate him. We all have to die sometime.'"

The cutting off of the nose was said to be rather a Piegan than a Gros Ventre practice. Cutting off the ears was perhaps a more common form of punishment inasmuch as there is a word designating a woman known to have been unfaithful, and which refers to having the ears cut off.

The adulterous woman whose hair was cut by her husband was not marked permanently as were the others, but it was a severe punishment nonetheless because long thick hair was one of the chief criteria of beauty in women as well as in men. But whatever the form of disfigurement inflicted by the husband, the woman would be cast aside by him and would have to seek refuge with some of her relatives. The family, especially her brothers, would feel keenly the disgrace, but as Singer put it, "Mothers would feel sorry for their daughters and could not refuse to take them in, and they would take their children, too, should they have any. It was very seldom a man would keep the children of a wife sent away for adultery."

Finally, a wronged husband could satisfy his honor by accept-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

684 ing indemnity from his wife's lover and allowing her unharmed to go to him. This solution was often resorted to and in fact was the one that was urged upon both parties concerned. It was customary for the paramour to offer compensation, although an occasional individual tried to dispose of an unwanted wife with profit to himself by taking the initiative in demanding indemnity. If there were no real evidence of wrong-doing, or if the man in question wished to brave the consequences, he might refuse. One instance was given by Singer concerning a man who, returning home one night, saw a young man crouched beside the lodge. "Although he took after the young man when he ran away, he could not catch him. The next day he told one of his wives—the sister of the one whom he pretended to suspect—to take her younger sister to the young man and demand in return a gun and a horse. The elder sister took up for the younger one and refused. So the husband told his oldest wife, unrelated to the other two, to carry out his orders. This one did as she was told. When confronted by the demand, however, the young man said: 'There is no truth in it. The old man did see something that made it look bad for me, but it wasn't what he thought.' The husband did not care to force the issue, since real evidence was lacking, and that was an end to the matter." Another example shows that even when the husband had evidence of his wife's infidelity he could not always collect indemnity. The husband in question sent his wife to her lover with a long list of things which he requested in return. The paramour, who did not want the woman as his wife, refused to pay the indemnity. "Perhaps another man would have killed his wife's lover when he refused, but this one took the easier [682] way by cutting off his wife's hair and turning her loose." In case the husband killed the paramour, it was interpreted as murder and he was subject to retaliation.

[554] A man who kept as wife a woman known to be unfaithful to him lost status. He would be considered weak and was subject to 684 humiliating taunts by his enemy-friends. Nevertheless some men 558 braved adverse public opinion out of deep affection for their erring wives. While not all went so far as Sits Like A Woman, his case is an interesting one. It was related by The Boy as follows.

"The famous chief Sits Like A Woman was at the height of

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

his popularity and power when he caught *in flagrante delicto* the youngest of his four current wives. He failed to act immediately, so the father of the young man with whom she had been discovered began to think of a way to save his son [fearing that Sits Like A Woman planned to injure him]. He decided to approach one of the ceremonial grandfathers of the chief and ask him to intercede. The ceremonial grandfather accepted the mission. He told Sits Like A Woman that the young man's father had such a high regard for him that he would not like to see his household disturbed any further and that, if he would consider this request, he should name the price. The chief listened very attentively and finally replied: 'Grandfather, I will do as you say. I have been thinking what I should do about this, and I have not punished my unfaithful wife nor even scolded her. Since it is you who came here to make this request of me, I will solve the situation in this way. Go back and tell the old man who sent you that I want his son's racehorse and eight other well-broken horses, and I want that old man to come over here and escort his new daughter-in-law back to his home. She is just as she always was. I have not disfigured her nor punished her, so he can make use of her in his household. When he carries out this demand, I will forget the whole matter.' The ceremonial grandfather was highly pleased and praised the chief for removing the stigma from his home by relinquishing his unfaithful wife. The father of the young man immediately set about getting the required horses and he and his wife loaded some of them with clothing and other articles. Together they led the horses toward the lodge of the chief, ostentatiously singing in his praise as they went. The old man even danced as he approached the lodge. After handing over the goods, the couple, followed by their new daughter-in-law, went back to their own lodge, all three singing as they went.

This should conclude the story of how a great chief received indemnity. There was a sequel, however, which illustrates that even the greatest and bravest warriors may succumb to the weakness of love and affection for their wives. On that very same day, about dusk, the chief's 'heart failed him.' He ordered the nine horses to be turned loose so that they could return to the camp from which they had come, although he kept the clothes and other

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

684
558

articles which had been given him. Then he told two of his wives to go to the camp and call from outside the lodge the name of that youngest wife, and, when she came out, to bring her back to him without offering any explanation. This placed Sits Like a Woman in a difficult position, giving his enemy-friends plenty of ammunition since they could justly taunt him that a woman had gotten the better of him. He was eventually able to live it down, however, so that although it was a temporary set-back to his colorful career, it did not mar it completely as might have been the case for a lesser man."

The above case was exceptional in that no others could be recalled wherein a man who had accepted indemnity actually took back his wife. Nevertheless other instances were given of men who disregarded public opinion to the extent that they ignored flagrant infidelity on the part of their wives. Usually however if the wife in question did not mend her ways, even the most tolerant husband lost patience. By giving her away quite casually and without compensation, he retrieved his reputation since he thus indicated that it was indifference toward her rather than the weakness of love which had caused him to overlook her infidelity.

One instance was given by Coming Daylight. "One of my uncle's wives was continually running away with different men and he allowed her to return each time without punishment. I was still a child and one day, for instance, I went with this woman for water rather far from camp. When we got to the creek, one of her lovers grabbed her and wouldn't let her go. Finally I got tired of waiting and called out that I was going home and would tell on them. Still she didn't come, so I left. My uncle asked me why I had come alone, so I told him what had happened. But when that woman showed up, my uncle said nothing to her. A long time went by. Then on one occasion when we were camped near the Bear Paws, there was a crowd of people, all more or less drunk, in my uncle's lodge. They called me in because I did not drink and, since my uncle was Keeper, they had to have someone to look after the Flat Pipe. So I was there and saw my uncle staggering around. His nose was running and he called a man by name and said: 'Come and clean my nose!' The man obliged him and my uncle said, pointing to that unfaithful wife of his:

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

'It is a good thing you cleaned my nose, because for that I am giving you that woman over there.'"

A husband who had harbored an unfaithful wife was likewise within his rights in "throwing her away." This was accomplished by his going to a public gathering and simply throwing down a stick to indicate that he was through with her. Whoever wished might pick up the stick and claim her as his wife without giving any compensation.

It was said, too, that if a man was "big enough" to allow his wife to go unpunished for adultery he usually would not refuse to eventually let her go to some lesser man who demeaned himself by asking for her. Thick related details of several transactions of this kind which occurred when he was a young boy. One of these was as follows:

"There was a man who had several wives, perhaps four. One day another man came to his lodge. He invited him in and said: 'This is the first time you ever came into my lodge, my friend. You must have a reason to come now, after all this time.' Then he said to his wife: 'Woman, get up and cook for my friend.' So the visitor spoke up: 'Well, my friend, the purpose of my coming here is to ask you for that Arapaho woman. I am not married now, I haven't a wife at present and I need a wife.' The host replied: 'All right, my friend, she is yours. After you eat, you could take her home.' When he had finished eating, the visitor said: 'Well, my friend, I have to go a little further. I want that boy of hers too.' The host answered: 'I hate to let my children go, but since he is so small you could take him, but don't ask for any of the others.' So the visitor, happy that he had gotten this woman without much talk and a boy as well, said: 'Well, my friend, since you are so good to me and give me your boy, I will give you a horse, my last horse.' It turned out that he was as good to this boy, whom he had attained in this way, as he would have been to his own son." It should be noted that the horse was given voluntarily and because of the child rather than in compensation for the wife.

It was the opinion of those women who had lived under this system, wherein the authority of the husband was so great, that all in all it worked well. They admitted that an occasional woman

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The husband would have to be a man of strong heart." The husband would be gravely anxious, and in a sense deeply embarrassed and humiliated, but could not show temper or "get mad"; "he would however have gotten mad," said Coming Daylight, "if his wife actually had had intercourse with the grandfather."

The character test of the wife and grandfather was equally severe or even more so, but was, as is obvious, of a different nature. "These women [the wives or substitutes]," The Boy commented, "were usually young women, just enjoying life to the fullest measure. They were of that age, and to make the test more severe their husbands kept away from them before it so that the temptation would be greater, more intense. And the 'grandfathers' were not harmless old men." Apropos of this test, The Boy remarked: "It was known by the Gros Ventres that the female sex is the weaker one, but in such matters it is the stronger one . . . of old the Gros Ventres held this [sex] a great weakness of mankind."

Penalties for failure in the sex-test were either supernatural or social or both. One ritual grandfather, who on one occasion could not stand the test and who had intercourse with his granddaughter, was found dead in his bed before four nights had passed. If the couple succumbed, the fact was very apt to become known. "The woman," said The Boy, "would sometimes tell, or else the couple would give themselves away afterwards by their actions. . . . They would naturally brood over it [their failure]. . . . It would prey on their minds and they would blunder and make mistakes, and it would drive them downward, afraid to join in social life. People would begin to comment: 'What is the matter with these two?' The Gros Ventres were very inquisitive and would want to know what was the matter. The couple would be driven to make a confession and get it over with. Or something would happen anyway to confirm the suspicion that people had of them. . . . Even if the two were lovers, it would have been hard to do this [fail in the ritual] test and yet keep it quiet."

There was, as would under the circumstances be suspected, appreciable differences of attitude toward this feature of the Crazy Dance on the part of husbands, wives and grandfathers. Some husbands, as we have seen, would not, for jealousy or for fear of